

June 2021

Judge Burke Lauded in Commemorative Meeting

Dicta Editorial Board

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.du.edu/dlr>

Recommended Citation

Judge Burke Lauded in Commemorative Meeting, 26 Dicta 29 (1949).

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Denver Law Review at Digital Commons @ DU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Denver Law Review by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ DU. For more information, please contact jennifer.cox@du.edu, dig-commons@du.edu.

Judge Burke Lauded in Commemorative Meeting



On the occasion of Judge Haslett P. Burke's last appearance on the Supreme Court on January 10, 1949, the officers and Board of Governors of the Colorado Bar, acting for that association and representatives of the local associations, held a commemorative meeting in the Supreme Court in Judge Burke's honor.

The remarks of the present and past presidents of the Colorado Bar Association made on that occasion are printed herewith.

Wm. Hedges Robinson, Jr.

President, Colorado Bar Association

*Honorable Justices, Mr. Attorney General and
Fellow Members of the Bar:*

Today, we wish to mark an important date in the judicial history of this state. It is the desire of the legal profession to acknowledge publicly the personal integrity, the willingness to work, the capacity for judicial administration, and the sense of humaneness of Justice Burke.

Your Honors, before this bar today are representatives of the local bar associations of the state, the officials of the Colorado Bar Associations, past and present, who have come to pay their respects to a venerated judge whose long and honorable term of office expires today. May I, therefore, present Mr. Thomas M. Burgess, former president of the Colorado Bar Association, with the request that he may address this court on behalf of our association and the lawyers throughout the state.

Thomas M. Burgess

Past President, Colorado Bar Association

I ask the permission of the Court to, at this time, address a few remarks in a matter which involves no controversial questions. It is indeed an honor

and a signal privilege to appear before the Bar of this Court upon this occasion. I am appearing in my own behalf, and as the representative and spokesman of every member of the Bar of this State. It is the first time, and probably will be the last time, that I will ever appear in this Court when what I have to say will bear the endorsement and approval of the entire Bench and Bar, as it does today.

The Bar of every section of the State is represented here this morning. The attendance is, of necessity, limited by the lack of sufficient space, but if the walls of this room could have been pushed back so as to accommodate all of those who wish to appear here, there is not a member of the Bench or Bar who would not be present on this occasion.

A few short months ago, Mr. Chief Justice Burke announced that upon the expiration of his present term, it was his choice to retire. That term of official service to the Bench and Bar, and the people of Colorado, expires today. We are gathered here to pay our respects, and to express our gratitude for the long, enviable and outstanding services of our Mr. Chief Justice Burke.

I made my first appearance before this Court in 1927. Justice Burke was then serving his first of three terms as Chief Justice. The occasion for my appearance was the oral examination upon my application for admission to the Bar. There were about thirty other applicants. We had each made a careful outside inquiry as to what we might expect in the examination. The older practicing attorneys had advised us that the oral examination would not be particularly difficult unless we happened to be examined by Chief Justice Burke. And in that event, we could be sure that he would ask questions on subjects for which we would be wholly unprepared. The names of the applicants were called in alphabetical order, and each of the Justices took his turn in the examination of one applicant. My position in the alphabet gave Justice Burke the opportunity to call me as his first prize. I approached this table with a hesitant step and an unusually rapid pulse. Then I glanced up, and I saw the kindly, fatherly face and the twinkling eyes of the Chief Justice. With that momentary glance, my fears vanished and we proceeded with the examination. I have never forgotten that kindly expression which gave me confidence, and I shall cherish its memory forever.

Every member of the Bench and Bar who has been admitted to practice since 1919 has had a similar experience, until today, more than three-fourths of the practicing lawyers in this State proudly display their certificate of admission bearing the signature of Haslett P. Burke.

We all know that for a period of thirty years, Mr. Justice Burke has sat on this Court interpreting, construing and establishing the law of this State, with such distinction and honor that he has won the praise of the Bench and Bar of the entire country. We may not be so familiar with all of his past history and accomplishments. I could not pass without mentioning a few of the many items of interest and records of service of such an illustrious person.

He was born in Iowa, seventy-four years ago, and attended the public schools of that State. It was not his privilege to enroll in one of the present day well-equipped law schools, but he sought his legal knowledge, well serving as a clerk and stenographer for a law firm. He was admitted to the Iowa Bar in 1896, and during that same year, moved to Colorado where he was immediately admitted to the Bar of this State.

He served as a Corporal in the Signal Corps in the Spanish-American War, and then returned to take over the duties of Clerk of the District Court of Logan County in 1901. In 1906, the people of the Thirteenth Judicial District correctly identified the mind of a great jurist and placed him on the District Bench. And he served in that capacity until 1919 when the people of the State commanded him to commence his long term of continuous service on this Bench.

Although his duties on the Bench required long hours and arduous labor, he was none the less, at all times, available for additional assignments. In 1907 he organized the Thirteenth Judicial District Bar Association, and has continuously maintained an active membership and interest in that group. He has been a member of both the Colorado Bar Association and the American Bar Association for more than forty years, and his sound advice and able assistance has always been available to those Associations.

In addition to all of these activities, he has in the past found time to serve as a lecturer on Constitutional Law at Denver University; he has served as Chairman of the Board of Arbitration between Western Railroads and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen; he has been President of the Board of Trustees of Clayton College. In 1941 he chose to continue his service on this Bench in preference to the honor of the tendered appointment as United States Senator.

After forty-two years of continuous service on the Bench, and after more than fifty years of service to the people of our state, Mr. Chief Justice Burke has chosen to officially retire from the Bench. We cannot, and will not, however, permit him to terminate his services to the people of Colorado, or to the Bar of this State. Upon the ending of his arduous duties here today, he will have more time to devote to his many other interests, and we trust and hope that we can continue to look forward to calling upon him for his able advice and assistance.

Mr. Chief Justice Burke, there are no mere words which can express our appreciation and gratitude for your many able years of service to the Bench and Bar of this State. We deeply regret to extend our greetings to you on the Bench for the last time today. Your able opinions and your sound judgment will be sorely missed. Your chair will be occupied by a succession of others, but there will never be another Justice Burke in the hearts of the people and the lawyers of Colorado. The lawyers of Colorado wish to retain a permanent spot in your thoughts, and as a small expression

of gratitude for your services, and in honor of your official retirement, it gives me great pleasure on behalf of the Colorado Bar Association, to present you with this clock. We only hope that whenever you glance at the time of day, this timepiece will constantly reflect the respect and affection which the members of the Bar hold for you.

Law Office Management Institute

An analysis by Ralph B. Mayo of the fiscal records of a law office, and a lively panel discussion by Lewis Dick, Merrill Knight and Harold Taft King on other law office management problems, constituted the second 1948-49 Institute of the Denver Bar Association on January 8 in the Telephone Company auditorium.

Not more than a hundred lawyers, secretaries and students braved the rigors of the weather to sit-in on the discussion of this very mundane but necessary phase of a lawyer's existence. Those who did found it rewarding. For those who failed to attend, but who are interested in the accounting half of the institute, there are still available a limited supply of Mr. Mayo's "Outline of Accounting System for Large, Middle and Small Attorneys at Law." So regardless of your waistband, you may have a copy for the asking, while they last, at the association's office.

Denver Bar Books Audited

An audit of the books of the Denver Bar Association was completed recently by Norman H. Gross & Co., Certified Public Accountants, and a modern, simplified system of accounting was installed.

The survey and audit was performed by Mr. Gross and his associates as a favor to the bar association without charge through the good offices of William L. Branch, chairman of the Auditing Committee.

At a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the association on February 1, 1949, Mr. Branch, reporting for his committee, described the results of the survey and recommended bonding of the secretary-treasurer and an annual audit. Both recommendations were accepted by the Board, which also gave a vote of thanks to Mr. Gross and his associates for making possible this much-needed improvement in the fiscal management of the association.

Admitted to a Higher Court

Since the last notice in DICTA, the following members of the Denver bar have died: Charles E. Compton, James D. Parriott, Richard Peete and Thomas L. Pollock. Word also has been received of the death of the following members of the Colorado Bar Association: Leonard E. Anderson of Brush and William R. Babb of Greeley.